



# *Life's a Hoot!*

*The International Owl Collectors' Club,  
54 Tiverton Road, Edgware, Middlesex, HA8 6BE, England.*

Greetings and welcome to issue nine. We are two years old! Not a lot has happened on the membership front this period - a few new members, a few non-renewals - so we are still at just over 200 members. There have however been a number of actual meetings, of which more later in this issue.

I hope this hasn't reached you very late, but I've been very pushed to do it at all because my full-time job (I'm a computer systems designer/programmer) has been spilling over into the rest of my life recently and I've been working all the evenings and weekends that I usually devote to the IOCC and Life's a Hoot. Please forgive me - I'm doing the best I can! If you have written to me and not received an answer please write again, as I have been more-or-less managing to keep up but have had a number of letters 'go astray' in the mail both coming to me and going out.

I haven't bought many new owls recently, as I'm saving up to buy some when I go on holiday to Canada next month, but a lot of old owls seem to be making their way to me when my friends and family 'rescue' them from junk/thrift/charity shops. I've had some adorable things that way and would recommend that if you have one near your home you should let them know that you will buy any owl, as most will save them for you. Some of the toys can look very sad but soon perk up with a damp cloth and a brush and I for one cannot leave them there looking sad and abandoned.

Looking through my scrap-books (or owl-bums as I call them) I noticed that I have several labels with owls on them that come from beer bottles. I also have at least one beer mat with an owl, so next issue we will feature owls associated with beer, larger etc. Please send in photocopies or actual items for this feature, if you have any. Thanks.

Thanks also to all the contributors to this issue.

Now read on.

*Elise*

## A VERY OWLY HOLIDAY

I knew before I went on holiday that at last I would meet my penfriend of 3 years - Elise, but what I didn't know was all the other owly things which would happen to me.

We (my husband and I) flew to England at the beginning of May to visit my family. We stayed with my sister and her husband. Two days after arrival we drove down to the south coast to visit my nephew in Bournemouth. On the way back we visited the New Forest Owl Sanctuary. That was absolutely wonderful. There were very many different owls at the sanctuary - I lost count of how many there were - ranging from the huge Siberian Eagle Owl to the tiny Pygmy Owl. There were babies which one could touch too! (Huge balls of soft down). A lecture was given in the afternoon which was very interesting held in a large wooden shed and included a display of a tawny and a barn owl flying. Of course I was the first one to put my hand up when they asked who would like to "catch" one of the owls (a tawny) as it flew from one side of the barn to the other, and then again when it was the barn owl's turn. Outside there were more flying displays, it always amazes me how HUGE the wingspan of an Eagle owl is. Unfortunately, there was no chance to have an eagle owl on your hand, but I once again got up to have a barn owl land on my hand. That was a really great day. Inside the owl sanctuary there was the "Hospitowl" for the sick and injured owls and even the cafe had a sign with two owls eating with knives and forks!

The second chance I had to hold a REAL owl was at the neighbour of a friend of my sister (doesn't word get round about us "OWLCOHOLICS"!). He has five owls in aviaries in his garden - some of which were born in captivity (no longer allowed to be released into the wild) and others who were found injured. One of the tawny owls was taken away from people who had found it in the wild, taken it home and kept it in a budgie cage! It had been very ill, and although it was now healthy it would never be able to fly because of the terrible treatment it had received! It was a really good evening too, as the person involved was very knowledgeable. He uses the owls to give lectures and displays to groups of people.

To finish off the evening we visited "The Tawny Owl" pub (beautifully painted pub-sign outside). My husband was poking around in the pub to see if there were any beer-mats for his collection (his beermat collection!) and the landlord asked him if he could help. My husband told him that I was very interested in owls as I have a huge collection of them, and the landlord said "have you seen my collection"? With great interest we followed him and he showed us his "collection" of 7 model owls!

At last came the day to meet Elise. My sister and brother-in-law drove us down to Edgware and we arrived at Elise's house. Wow, what a lot of owls! everywhere you look (even in the garden - but no real ones). We had a very nice day talking about owls and lots of other things, I showed Elise video films of my collection and of the owl sanctuary. We both had some owls to give each other.

We had to leave the next day to come home but I won't forget my OWLY holiday for a long time.

Rowena Cook-Lau, Germany

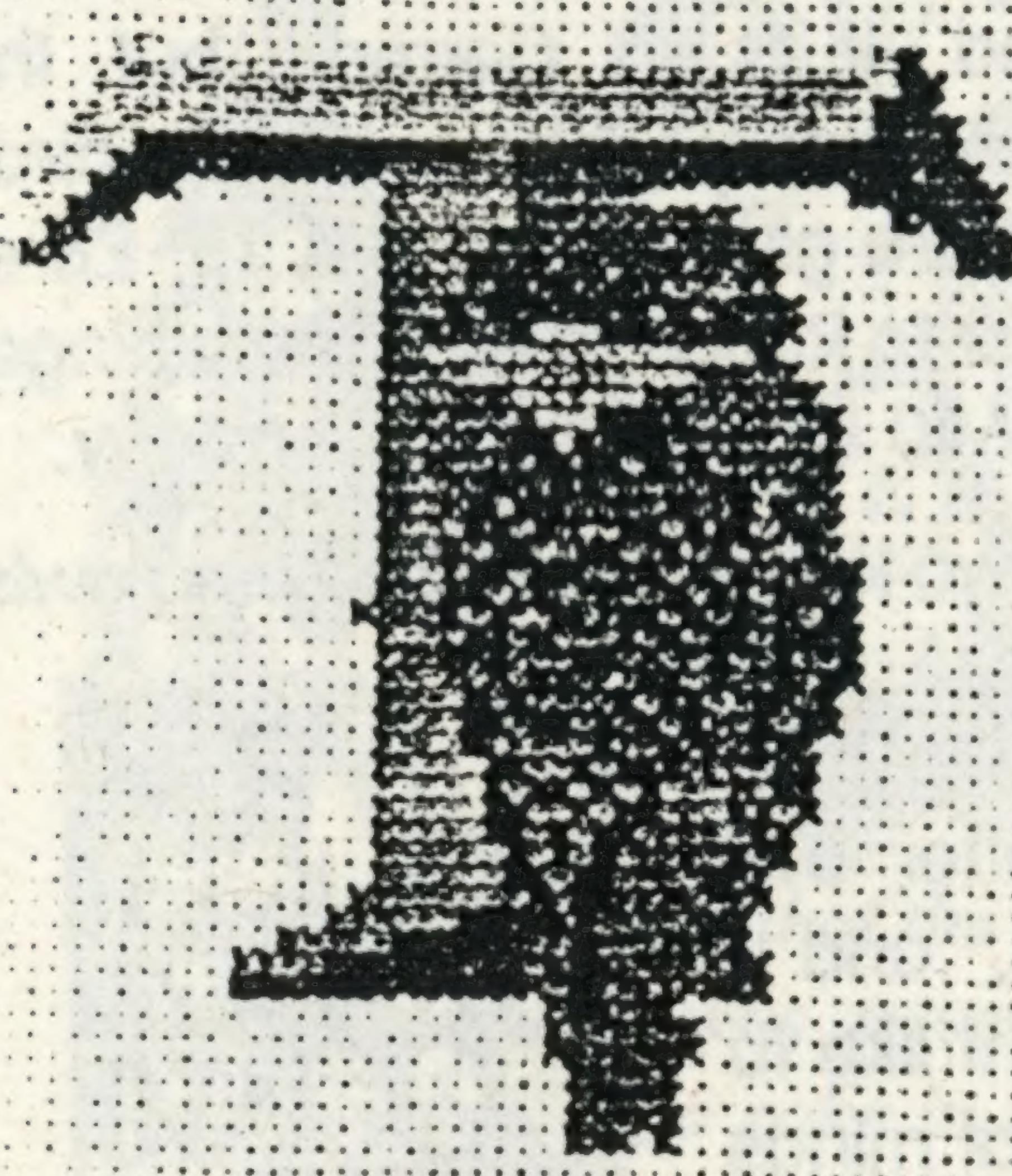
## Owls Seen Around

I've got oodles of owls for all over the place to tell you about this time!

Let's start with a great greetings card called Owls of Laughter. It is as big as this newsletter, brightly coloured and has lots of 'owl jokes' on it, as shown. For price incl. postage write to the artist, Shirley Veaker, 31, Arundel Drive West, Saltdean, Brighton, BN2 85J, England or call 0273 306003.

The Bradford Exchange has two owl plates available which are part of a series of 3 by Pollyanna Pickering, a wonderful artist. They cost about £20 each plus p&p. Write to P.O. Box 608, Stoke on Trent, Staffordshire, ST4 4SD England.

Cuggly Wugglies are pins and fridge magnets by Elgate Products Limited, Broadstairs, Kent, England. They are about an inch and a half tall and there are several quite realistic owls in the series. Call 0843 866440 for local distributors.



Australia next - a cross-stitch kit illustrating the letter T with a Tawny Frogmouth is available from Allura Design, P.O. Box 579, Willoughby, NSW 2068, Australia. I think the finished design is about 20cm by 21cm but I haven't had time to stich mine yet. I know a frogmouth isn't really an owl but it's close enough for me.

Some cute owl decals, also known as decorator transfers, which can be used indoors or out, are available from Selex Decal Pty. Ltd., 5-7 Eileen Road, Clayton, Victoria 3169, Australia. Call Vic. 419 6855 for more information.

Over to Canada. Last issue I told you about a company specialising in bird-of-prey items, The Eyrie, 803A Braemar St. S.E., Medicine Hat, Alberta, T1A OV4, Canada, but I got the catalogue price wrong. It costs just \$1 in North America, \$2 elsewhere. Sorry. A new catalogue will be available by the time you get this.

----- Continued overleaf ----->

South to the U.S.A. - a set of 100 owl-labels like the one shown here, with your name and address, is available from Walter Drake, 9532 Drake Building, Colorado Springs, Colorado 80940. They cost \$3.95 plus \$1.95 postage, but are only available in the U.S.A. If you are elsewhere, it might be good to become pen-pals with a U.S. member so that they can get you some!

I just love the rubber stamp below, which is available from the Effie Glitzfinger's Art and Rubber Stamp Emporium, 45 Forum Center, Chesterfield, MO 63017, U.S.A., or send \$3 for a catalogue. Send more from outside the U.S.A. to cover the extra postage.



see them. Either this is a coincidence or great minds

think alike,  
even if  
they live  
a very  
long  
way  
apart!



Elise Mann  
54 Tiverton Road  
Edgware, Middlesex  
HA8 6BE, England

Back to Europe - Rudolf Schaaf and his colleagues in Arbeitsgemeinschaft Eulenschutz have complied a huge list of all owls on postage stamps, in alphabetic order by country. Private editions from places such as Oman and Staffa are not included. It is in German but the numbers from the Stanley Gibbons 'Collect birds on stamps' book are given. Send DM 15, £6 or \$10 U.S. for the list to Rudolf at Neckarweihinger Strasse 30, D-71640 Ludwigsberg, Germany.

Finally, here are two lottery tickets showing owls, one from the U.S.A. and one from Australia. They arrived in my letter box just days apart, and I thought you might like to



## Owl Together Now!

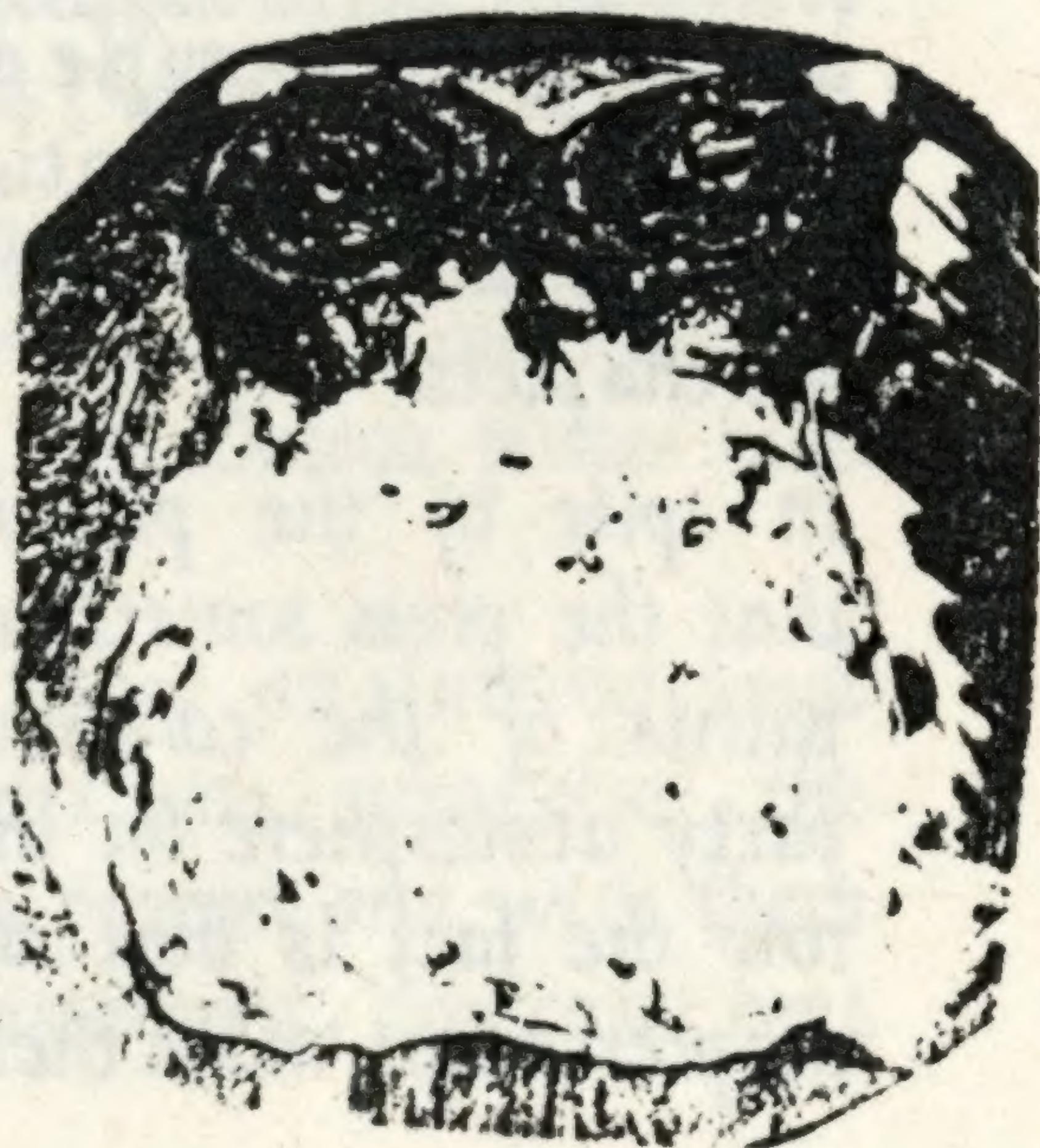
This is the first meeting of the IOCC in Victoria, Australia. Quite a historic occasion, we were all very excited. We met at Vivienne's house which looks like an Owl museum. Besides some beautiful owl ornaments there were some excellent framed prints and paintings which we were all drooling over. The bedroom had a mountain of soft toy owls, every one really cute. We saw a video about owls, too. We agreed to meet bi-monthly in each others homes just to chat, and have since met at Michela's house and that has also been taken over by the 'darling creatures'. She even has a guardian owl at her back door.

From Betty Grewcock



Germany to sell in aid of the German owls and I sold some items in aid of our charity funds. It was a very very hot day so instead of baking a cake in my owl-shaped cake pan I put in softened ice-cream and re-froze it. It turned out quite well! We also watched owl videos and had a good time talking about our collections. The only sad note was that I put some owls out in my front garden to help people to find the house and despite the door being open and all of us being in the front room where we could see out, one of them managed to 'fly away'. I wonder if the thief collects owls too!

This is all the attendees at the recent IOCC meeting in London, England. The Schaafs, from Germany, had said that they would be here for a visit so I arranged a meeting for that day so that they could meet as many owl-lovers as possible while they were here. Rudolf brought some owl cards, medals and other items from



## My Sisters, The Owls

by Barbara Blair Pixley

The Greek Letter System of organisations in America began in colonial times, starting with Phi Beta Kappa which was founded in 1776 at William and Mary College in Virginia. It later became a prestigious academic honorary, as it is today.

There are various kinds of Greek letter societies: academic, professional and social. It is to this last category that Chi Omega, known by its owl symbol, belongs. These social fraternities (a general term for all such groups or for societies for men only) and sororities (for women only) are known as Nationals as they are governed by a National Board of Governors.

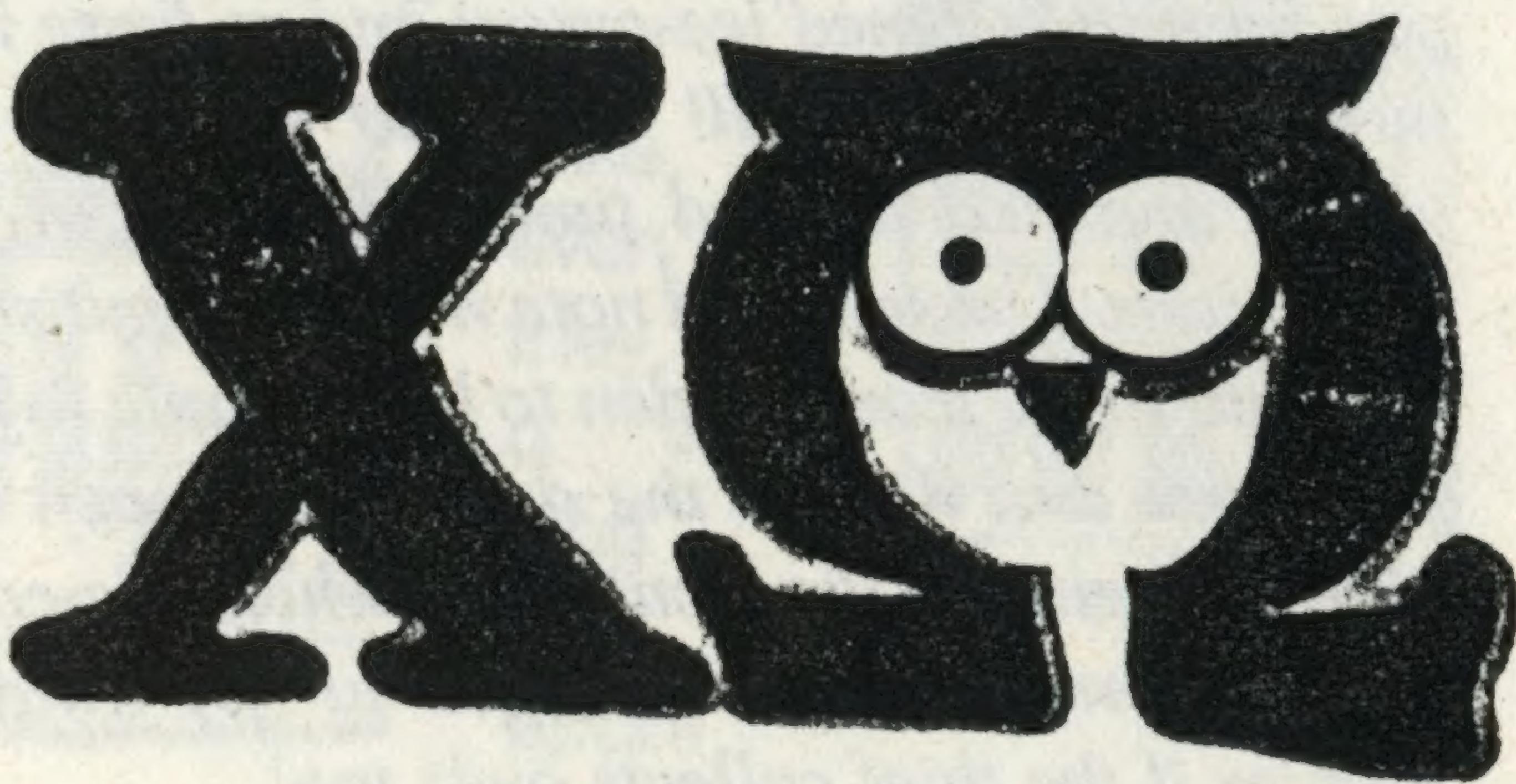
The National or Social Fraternity System is wide-spread on college campuses throughout the U.S.A., having begun in the last half of the 19th Century. They provide 'a second family' and a 'home away from home' for students. Many live in fraternity and sorority houses receiving - for a basic fee - all room and board. On many campuses the Greeks are the nucleus of social and political life.

The Active chapters consist of undergraduate students, but once initiated you become a member or sister for life. When you graduate you can join your local Chi Omega Alumnae Group and be active in numerous social and charitable ways, as well as supporting the closest active chapters. Being a sorority woman is a wonderful way to network professionally and meet new people who have shared interests. You can go practically anywhere in the world and make contact with a sister Chi Omega.

At most Universities the fraternities are overseen by representatives from the chapter of each society. This is known as the Pan-Hellenic or All-Greek. The set standards for 'the row', as the area of fraternity and sorority houses is usually known.

Each National has its own ritual, aims, ideals, colours, songs, flowers, crest/coat of arms, pin etc. One of the loveliest Greek traditions is the 'pinning ceremony' - when a fraternity man gives his pin to his girlfriend. The men come to the front of the sorority house and are met by the women holding candles. Then, by candlelight, the couple are serenaded with the appropriate chapter songs. There are also lots of parities and exchanges between the chapters.

In spite of the picture that the press sometimes paints of the constant party atmosphere on the row the fact is that all chapters must 'make their



grads! - that is, meet the academic standards as set by the college - or they are put on probation for a semester (term). If at the end of that period they have not brought up the average grade they are put 'off campus' until they can measure up. Hazing (severe requirements made on new members) is no longer permitted and most of the groups are known for community involvement and charity. If an occasional prank makes it into the newspapers - well, these are done by the small minority.

Members are chosen during a Rush week where prospective members visit all houses. Each side can then invite back or refuse ensuing invitations until a final bid is extended by a house to a rushee. When accepted, the rushee goes through a beautiful ceremony and becomes a Pledge for a semester to learn about the history and precepts of the group. If needed they are given help with their studies. If they cannot meet sorority standards they cannot 'go active'. (Sorority academic standards are usually higher than the university's.) If they meet all requirements the pledges become actives in an impressive candlelight ceremony. They learn the true meaning if the symbols, passwords and handshake.

When my daughter was initiated into Chi Omega she was chosen as Model Initiate for her contributions to her Pledge Class and to the Chapter. Being there in the chapter room surrounded by members of the Active Chapter and some of my Alumnae friends to share the ceremony as we became 'sisters' is one of my fondest memories. That these are truly Brotherhoods and Sisterhoods forever is what makes membership so special.

Chi Omega was founded in 1895, so our centennial will be celebrated next year with the dedication of our grand new headquarters in Memphis, Tennessee. Those will really be Owl Filled Days! Chi O is the largest National in America, with thousands of members both graduate and undergraduate across the country and world, in every state of the Union. For example I pledged at the University of Southern California and my daughter pledged at San Diego State University.

Our ritual is based on the Eleusian Mysteries and the Goddess Demeter. The owl is the symbol of Athena - the Greek goddess of wisdom and our motto is 'Wisdom is a virtue which highly glorifies woman! Chi Omega places high emphasis on scholarship.

Thus began my owl collection. Ironically when I joined an International Organisation called Mensa I discovered that their symbol was - what else? - the owl. Must be fate ... anyway these groups continue to prosper and with them the owl as a symbol of excellence, achievement and sisterhood. You can't beat that!



## Architectural Owls

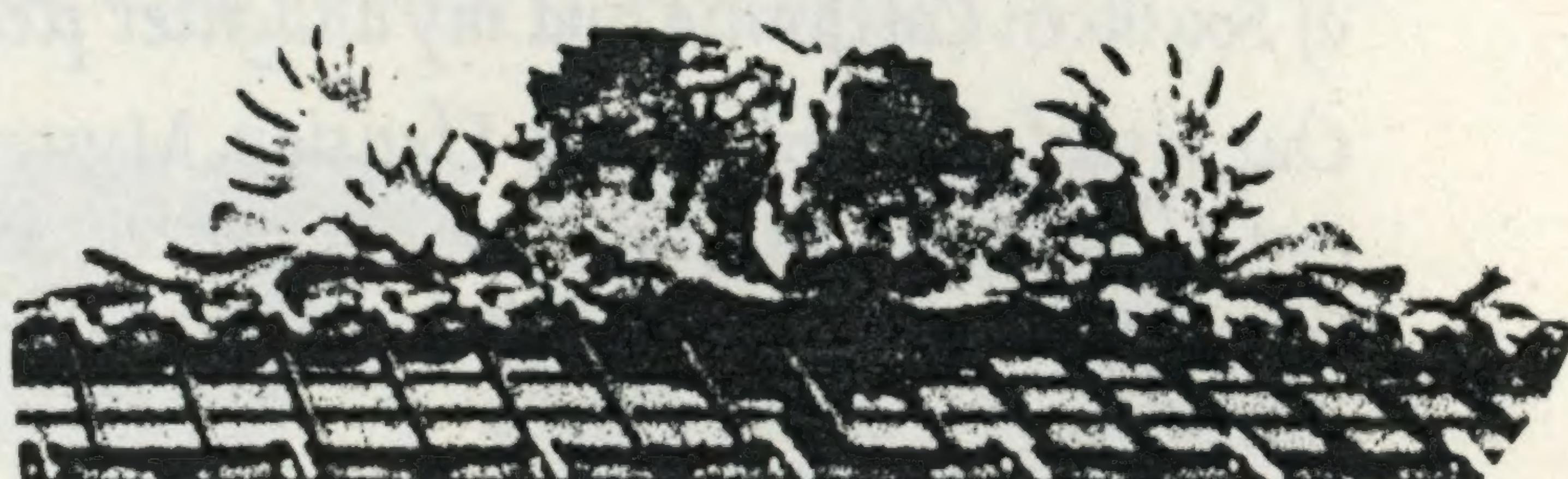
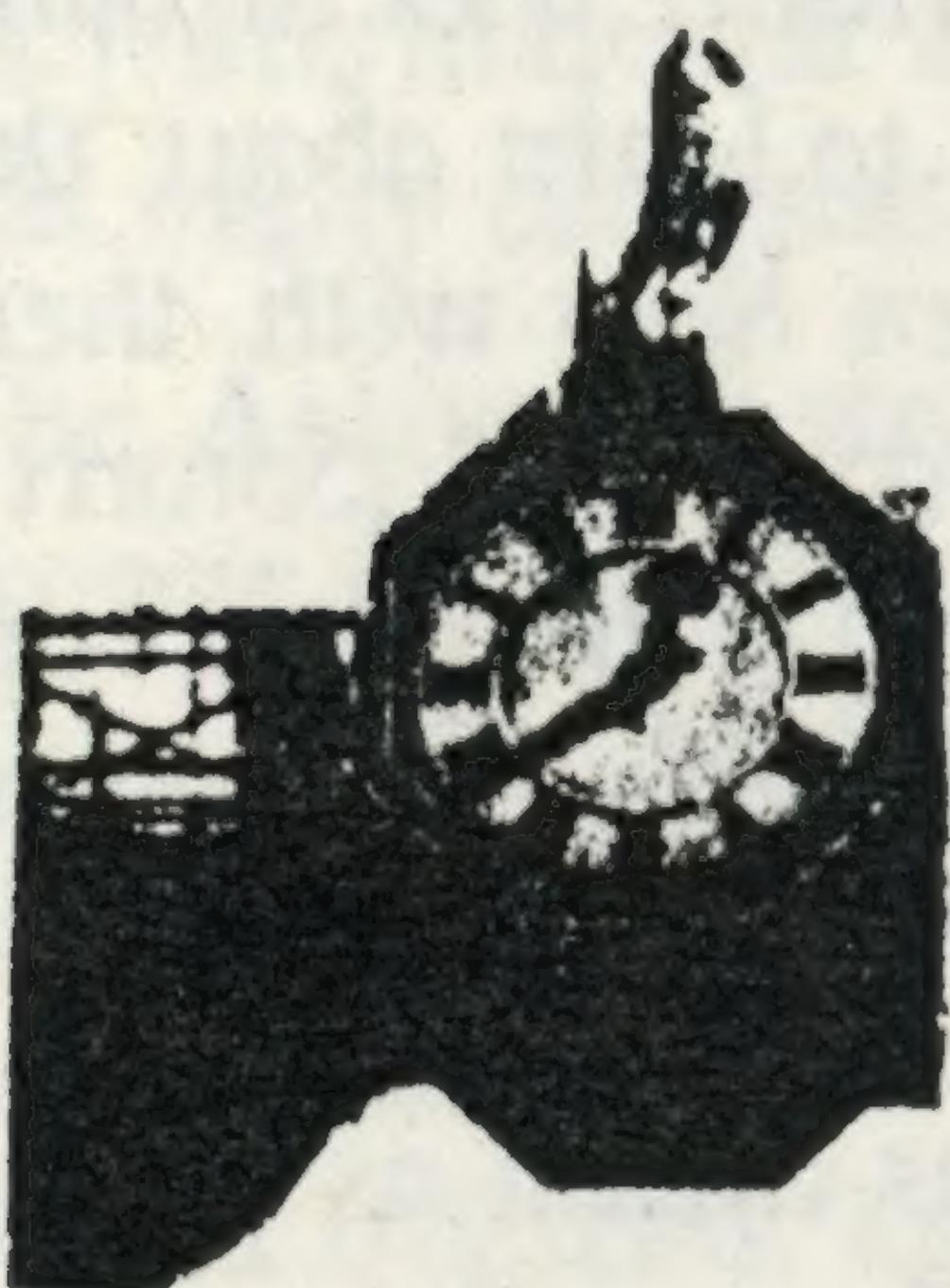
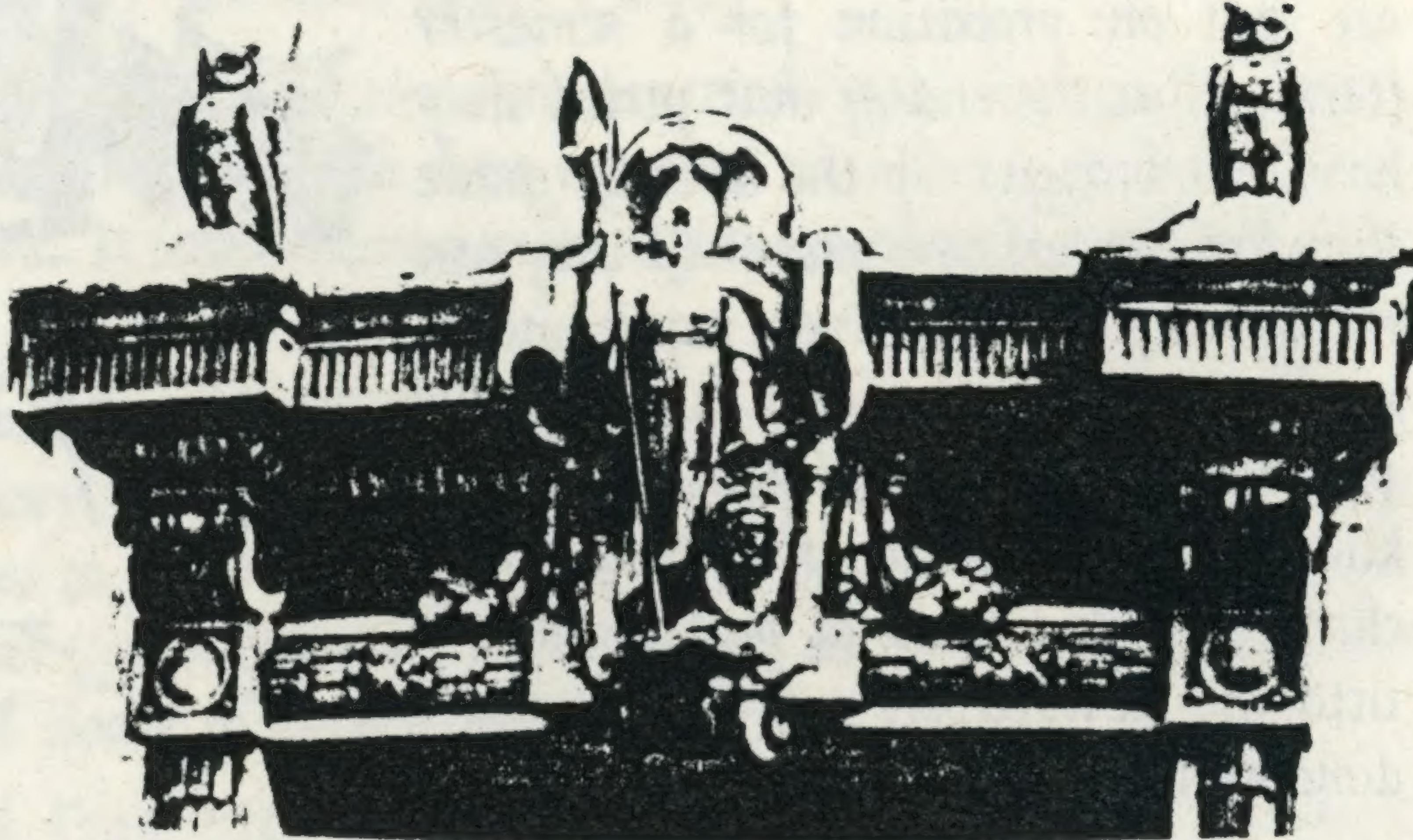
Ever since Egbert's article about owls in Amsterdam last issue, I have been looking out for owls on buildings in England. I found a building in the City of London, on Cannon street opposite London bridge.

It belongs to an insurance company (Guardian Royal Exchange) and has stone owls above the main door and gold-coloured owls on top of a sign and a clock. The figure between the owls on the door is probably Minerva. Nearby, at the corner of Luthbury and Princes Street, there is a little dome. Under the dome are two lights, and under each light is a stone owl. A few days later, while on a day-trip to Brighton, I noticed a Greek-style owl on the door of a bank.

David Montgomery has been owl-hunting for us in Chicago, and has sent us a picture of the impressive new owl statue on the Washington Library there. The owl and surrounding scrollwork are hollow-cast metal, covered with verdigris copper, and the entire sculpture is said to weigh some 750 pounds.

Chicago obviously likes to do things in a big way!

Owls do seem to get everywhere, so please 'look up' at the architecture around you (and around any areas you are lucky enough to visit) and send us photographs or drawings of any built-in owls you find!



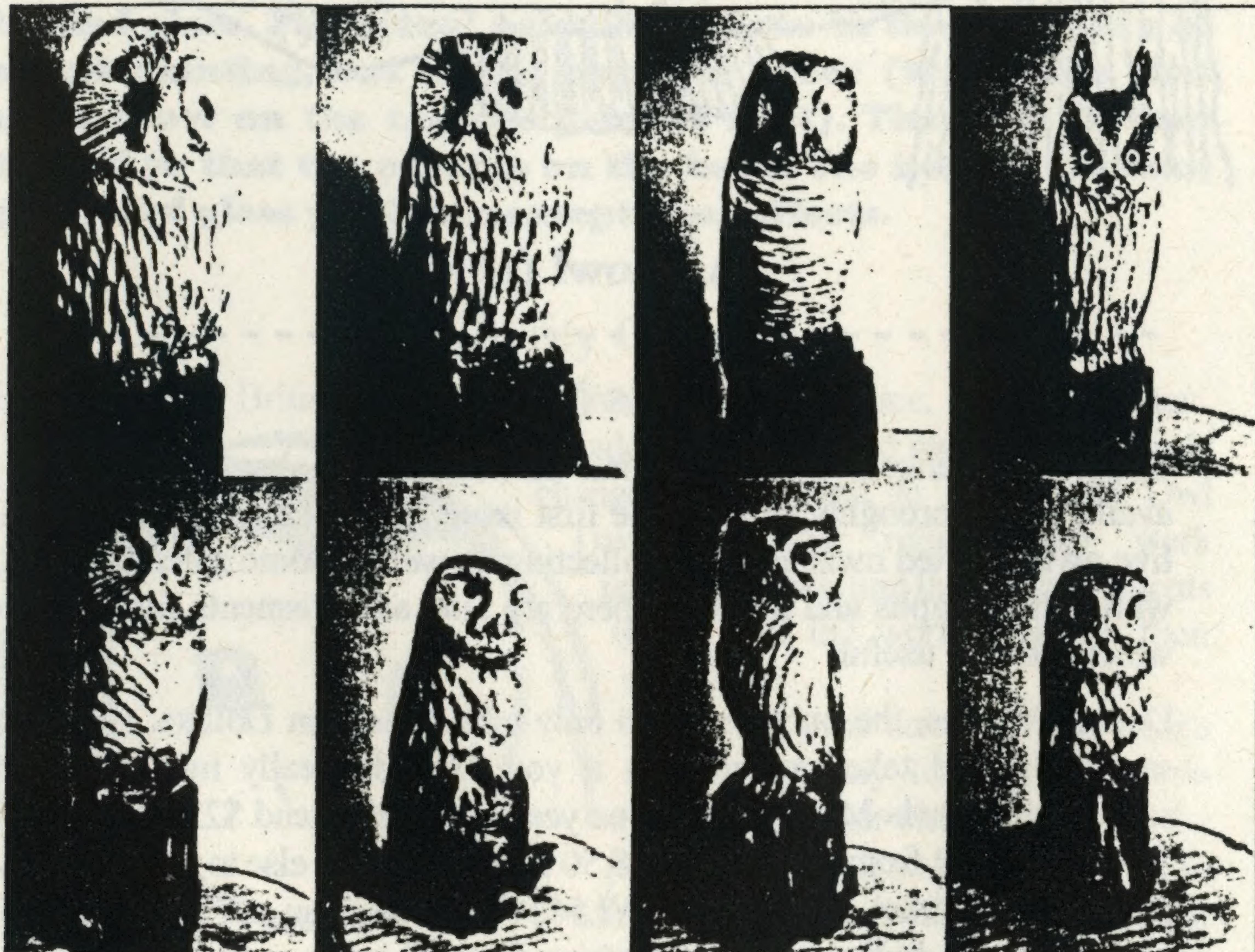
## *An Owl Creator*

by Gerlinde Rilling

I'd like to draw your attention to an artist who specialises in creating amazingly lifelike owls in wood. To give you a short summary: Lasse Kuparine is a well-known carver who lives and works in Sweden (Nord-Varmland). Our family lived there and we became friendly. As I found his work so pleasing that in 1988 I began to organise exhibitions for him in Germany. His great success is due to his unique portrayal of nature. Some towns in Sweden and Germany have over-sized owl statues carved by Lasse.

One special exhibition was 'European Owls' which is at present in the touring exhibition 'Owls and Men'. Lasse Kuparinen made all the European owls in their natural sizes, using a unique technique. He uses the year-rings of trees and a special surface treatment to make the owls' plumage, which is very realistic. All the owls can be made as sculptures or reliefs, and are made to order. No two are exactly alike. There are three owl-lovers in Germany who have already collected the whole series of Lasse's European owls.

The prices for these owls range from 340 DM to 3,500 DM, and are available from Lasse Kuperinen, Tellasen 2112, S-680 65 Holjes/Severige/Sweden (telephone, 0046 564 20272) or Gerlinde Rilling, Graseneck 4, 72770 Reutlingen, Germany (telephone 07121 506 542).



**What does an Owl use to dry itself?**



**A T-owl (towel)!**

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**\*\* Owls Magazine \*\***

The new American 'Owls Magazine' that I told you about last issue is now available. I thoroughly enjoyed the first issue, which contained articles about live owls, crafted owls and owl collecting as well as some splendid black and white photographs and artwork. There are also advertisements for owly items, which I found useful!

Donna Porykus, the publisher, can only take American Dollars, although she says she could take an owl item if you find this really impossible. So to subscribe to Owls Magazine for one year (4 issues), send \$22.50 from within the U.S.A., \$24 from Canada or \$28.50 from anywhere else to: Owls Magazine, 3019 Adams Street, Two Rivers, WI 54241, U.S.A. You can also have a single issue for \$6 including p&p. I'm looking forward to the next one!

## *The Craft Spot - Pictures Behind Glass*

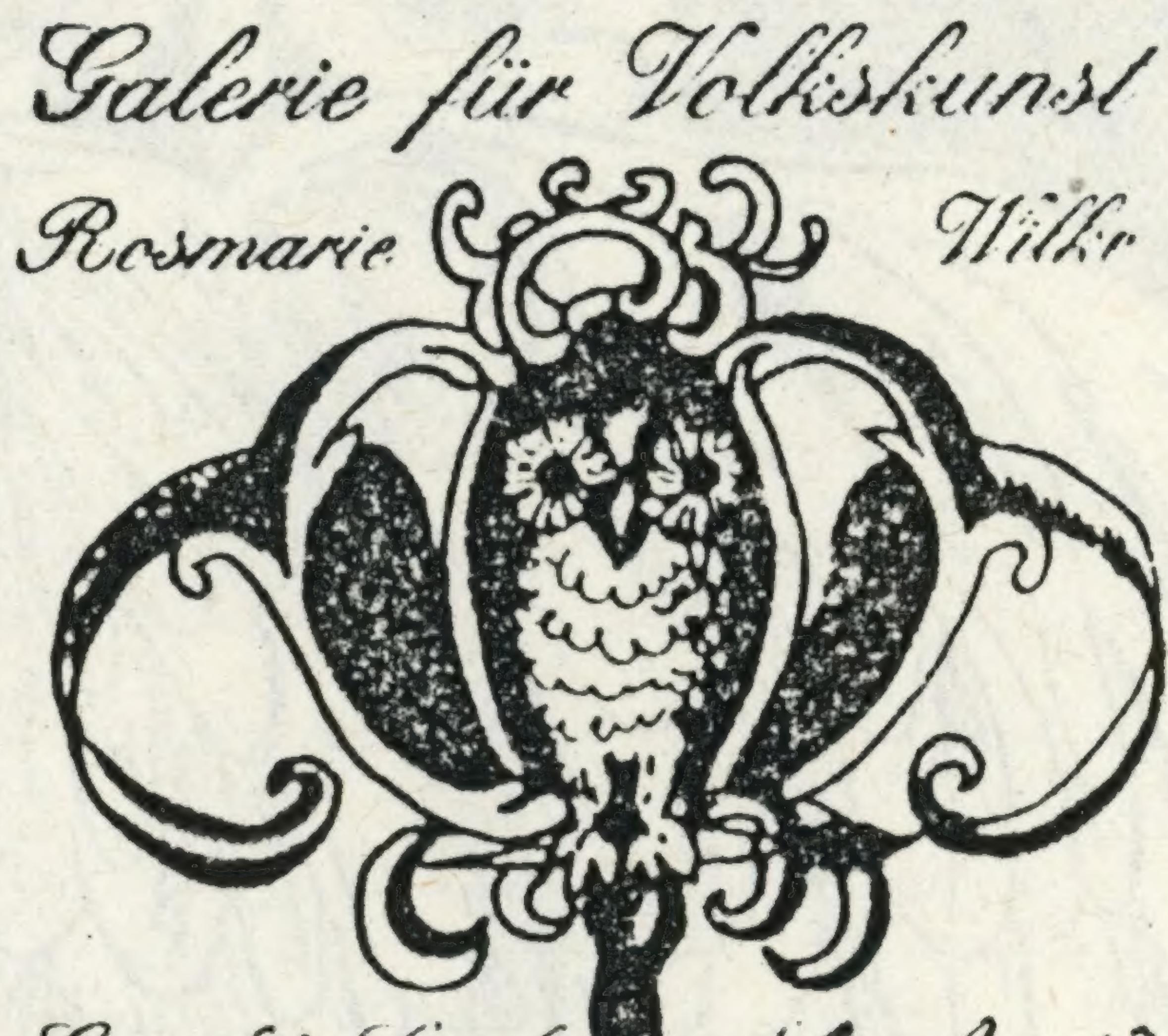
**by Rosmarie Wilke**

(Rosmarie Wilke runs the Galerie fur Volkskunst, which I think is the 'Folk art gallery', in Germany and has provided these instructions and the beautiful drawing on the back page of this issue. If you would like to see or buy her work, do contact her.)

**Pictures behind glass are painted as follows:**

A pattern (an illustration, photograph or drawing) on paper is placed under a piece of glass and copied with fine strokes of a brush. Subsequently the outline is painted with different colours.

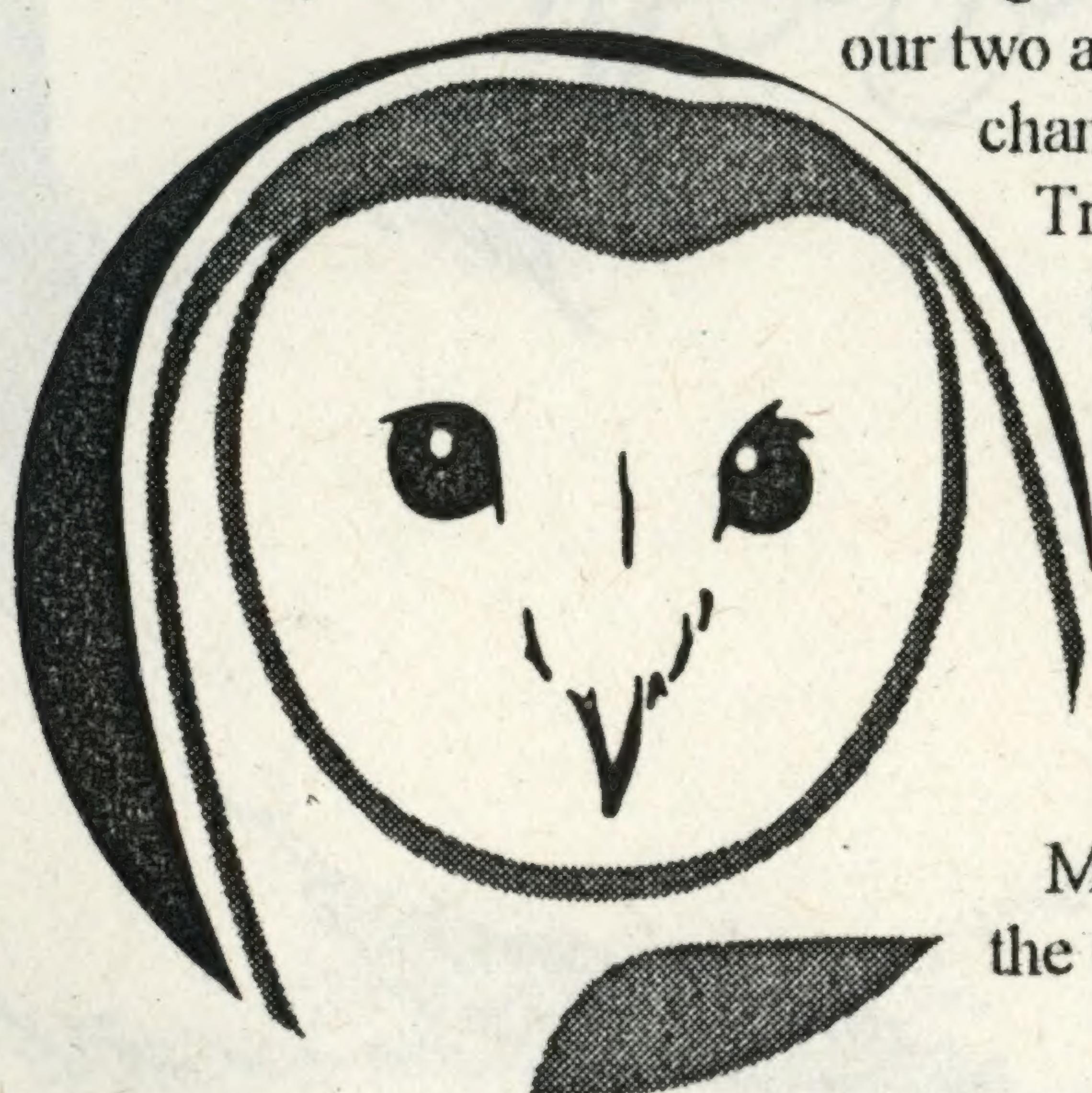
The glass itself holds the picture, rather than the picture being just an item behind glass. The actual painting is done in the same way as an oil painting, but in the opposite order (the layers that must show on the top are painted first). The pane is then turned so that the paint is on the back. The hearty union of paint and glass produces exceptional effects.



Ewald-Sark-Strasse 13  
D 93191 Walderbach  
Telefon 09164/719

## Charity Corner

BOBARS, the British Owl Breeding And Release Service, who look after our two adopted short-eared owls, have recently changed their name to the World Owl Trust to better reflect their work protecting owls and their environments throughout the world. This is their new logo.



We have just sent off this year's adoption money for 'our' pair - do look out for the club's name on the adoption notice if you manage to go to Muncaster Castle in Ravenglass to visit the Owl Centre.



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